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1. ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Regional Conference on Brain Drain
And Capacity Building in Africa

22-24 February 2000
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Report of the Regional Conference on Brain Drain and
Capacity Building
in Africa

1. INTRODUCTION

1. The development of capacity to manage in the public and private sectors and community groups has been found to be critical for development both in the newly industrialised countries of East Asia and elsewhere. However, in Africa, a lack of consensus on the critical elements needed to build and strengthen indigenous capacities as well as maintain and effectively utilise them have been the problem with past capacity building efforts and the subsequent migration of human capital in the form of brain drain. As Africa loses its "best and brightest" to the industrialised world the argument has been made that the continent is simultaneously losing a significant proportion of the wealth needed to establish a foundation for future growth. It is against the backdrop of the continuing trend in human capital flight from the continent to developed countries and the implication of this for development capacity that the question of brain drain and capacity building was adopted as the theme for the Regional Conference on Brain Drain and Capacity Building in Africa. The Conference was organised in collaboration with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 22 to 24 February 2000. The purpose of the Conference was to provide a forum for discussion and critical examination of the key issues pertaining to the brain drain in the African region in the context of the current debate about capacity building in the continent. The Conference specifically attempted to:

- Review various approaches (and experiences) in capacity building and the extent to which they took account of the flight of human capital and its impact on existing or future capacity.
- Develop a comprehensive approach for effectively utilising human resources in Africa.
- Make recommendations and disseminate to African policy-makers practical implementation modalities to stem or reverse the brain drain and build capacity at national and regional levels.
- Propose the development of concrete project activities geared to strengthening human resource capacity building and the return of qualified African to the continent.

2. ATTENDANCE

2. The Conference was attended by about 130 participants including four African Ministers of Education, educational policy makers from 29 ECA member States including 11 universities, 12 institutions of higher learning, 7 Non-governmental institutions and senior representatives from development agencies and other experts invited in their personal capacity, and drawn from all the sub-regions of Africa. Present at the meeting were representatives of the following member States of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA): Angola, Algeria, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Libya, Mali, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Somalia, the Sudan, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe.

3. The following United Nations specialised agencies and African inter-governmental organisations, non-governmental organisations and institutions were also in attendance: the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); the World Health Organisation (WHO); the

United Nation Higher Commission for Refugees (UNHCR); the International Institute for Capacity Building for Africa (IICBA); the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO); the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), the Organisation of African Unity (OAU); the European Union (EU); the African American Institute (AAI); the African Foundation for Development (AFFORD); Ecole Inter-Etats des sciences et medecine veterinaires (EISMV); Centre de recherche en economie appliqué (CREA); Nigerian Institute for Social and Economic Research (NISER); the Reseaux ouest et central africain de recherche en education (ROCARE); the Reseaux des Femmes Africaines leaders pour les paix et le Développement ((RFALP-Dev), Femmes Africaines et Solidarité (FAS), Insitut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD), the Kenyan National Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Kenyan Medical Association (KMA); the Secretariat for Institutional Support to Economic Research Centres in Africa (SISERA); the International Development Research Centre (IDRC); the Organisation for Social Sciences Research in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA); the International Organisation for Migration (IOM); and the Association of African Universities (AAU) including 11 African universities.

3. AGENDA AND ORGANISATION OF WORK

4. The Conference adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the Conference
2. Session 1:
 - The Brain Drain Africa: What do We Know?
 - Africa's Capacity: Issues and Initiatives.
3. Session 2:
 - Capacity Building in Education: The impact of Brain Drain on Higher Education in Africa.
 - Knowledge Generation and Retention in Africa.
 - The Secretariat for Institutional Support to Economic Research Centres in Africa
4. Session 3:
 - The South African Network of Skills Abroad: A Concrete Brain Gain Strategy.
 - Aid Agencies' Interventions in Africa: Helping to Create Brain Gain.
5. Session 4 :
 - National, Sub-regional and Institutional Experiences in Brain Drain and Capacity Building.
6. Session 5:
 - Working Group 1: The Brain Drain at Different Sectors: measures for reversing it.
 - Working Group 2: Strategies for Improving Government-Education-Industry Linkages in Capacity Building.

- Working Group 3: Knowledge Generation and Retention in Africa.
7. Session 6:
 - Reports by the Working Groups
 8. Session 7:
 - Panel Discussion on Brain Gain and Capacity Building
 9. Session 8:
 - Conference Report and Closure.

4. ACCOUNT OF PROCEEDINGS

3.1 Opening of the Conference

5 Mr. Samuel Nyambi, UN Resident Co-ordinator and UNDP Resident Representative for Ethiopia, and Chairperson gave the general opening statement for the Regional Conference on Brain Drain and Capacity Building in Africa. He began by pointing out that capacity building has been heralded as one of the preconditions for sustainable development and a missing link in international development co-operation in Africa. He emphasised the importance of building and strengthening critical capacities and the need to find effective strategies to reduce the exodus of highly trained professionals. Furthermore, he pointed out that policies and strategies to retain and effectively utilise the continent's human and institutional capacities were imperative.

6 Ms. Lalla Ben Barka, the Deputy Executive Secretary of the Commission welcomed participants to the conference and thanked the people and Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for their support and acknowledged the effective collaboration of the three institutions, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the ECA in sponsoring and organising the conference. Stating that the goal of poverty reduction was the overarching objective of development in the continent, she stressed that Africa could claim the 21st century if the issues of human and institutional capacities were placed as top priorities of development. She provided information to underscore the magnitude of the brain drain and capacity building problems, deplored the high costs of expatriate technical assistance to the continent, and argued that Africa's underutilisation of its indigenous capacities, especially in the area of science and technology, contributed significantly to its low level of participation in R&D.

7 The Deputy Executive Secretary pointed out that investment in human resource development and institution building, as well as retaining and sustaining these capacities were crucial elements in accelerating growth in Africa. Further she argued that Africa would not benefit from globalisation unless it developed and took advantage of existing opportunities to utilise science and technology. She pointed out that the ECA could play a positive role in this by organising national policy dialogues and workshops, identifying appropriate expertise in its regional and global mandates, and through making effective use of information technology to

link it to the global market-place as well as to African professional communities in the Diaspora. In the latter area, she pointed out the Commission had been able to create the African Information Society Initiative (AISI), which was an action framework to build information and communication infrastructure in Africa.

8. Drawing on successful cases of non-intellectual return programmes, she urged the Conference to devise realistic and implementable co-operative schemes to maximise the contribution of the Diaspora to the economic development of their countries of origin. She stressed that international and regional capacity building institutions had a key role to play in bridging the continent and its Diaspora. In conclusion, the ECA is collaborating with IDRC to develop a project on the African Consultancy Capacity Building initiative that will link up African professionals abroad and the counterparts in Africa. She urged participants to put their heads together and forge a new approach that will turn the brain drain problem into brain gain.

9. In her opening statement, Mrs. Ndioro Ndiaye IOM Deputy Director General, noted that the organisation of the conference was another tangible demonstration of the longstanding co-operation and joint efforts between ECA, IOM and IDRC, in their efforts to reverse the Brain Drain.

10. On the issue of brain drain, Mrs. Ndiaye observed that needs and priorities for Africa in the beginning of the new century were not the same as those experienced a few decades ago and this called for the development of new concepts that would not only enhance the transfer of qualified resources but also maximise local employment potentials and consolidate intra-regional labour markets through better utilisation of qualified human resources. She underscored the importance of the political commitment of all member States of the ECA and the OAU as absolutely necessary step to addressing these concerns. These objectives, she stated, cannot be achieved on their own, unless supported by a political strategy critical to laying the foundation for sustainable development; an economic strategy necessary for Africa's survival; and a cultural strategy essential to protect Africa's identity.

11. She further stated that one of the main vehicles through which the IOM has sought to alleviate the brain drain phenomenon in Africa has been through the Return of Qualified African National Programme (RQAN), implemented in the context of the subsequent Lome, I, II, and III Conventions. Currently, negotiations were underway with the EU to further extend the programme, incorporating lessons learned over the last two decades. This entailed taking stock of the new parameters of human resources in the continent aimed at retaining capacities and enhancing horizontal co-operation; extending geographical coverage to include the francophone countries; increasing the number of partners to include such organisations as ECA and OAU as well as representatives of the private sector, NGOs; and strengthening linkages between political reform and good governance; and introducing the debate on migration in the negotiation of the next Lome Convention between the EU and the ACP countries.

12. In conclusion, Mrs. Ndiaye urged the meeting to adopt some concrete recommendations such as the establishment of an observatory on brain drain and capacity building; setting up a database of African experts available in the domain of social, cultural and economic development; to raise awareness among Governments and the public at large on the evolution of

the phenomenon of brain drain in the different countries; and to initiate results-oriented dialogue between host and origin countries in order to prepare the effective return of our migrants for submission to the next Council of Ministers on behalf of the Heads of State and Government of the OAU members.

13. In his opening remarks, Mr. Sibry Tapsoba, Regional Director for West and Central Africa, International Development Research Centre (IDRC) pointed out that the human dimension to development was not just another addition to the development dialogue. He stressed that development was about people and should remain at the central stage of the dialogue. He insisted that we should focus on who development was meant for, to look beyond the numbers and indicators, and, insisted that even though these were important, they should be used to guide the quest of the continent for better living conditions.

14. He deplored the state of capacity in Africa arguing that four decades after independence, education and training had deteriorated across the whole continent. He observed that in most countries, capacity deficiencies were interrelated. Without an efficient and skilled public sector, the economic, political and social environment and policies necessary for sustained growth could not be effectively maintained. The continent lacked the necessary human and institutional capacity to compete with the other continents. "How can we keep the best of our minds," he asked, "if we continue to pay less to our top researchers and experts than the youngest unskilled military personnel and our security guards"? He stressed that Africa should value and treat its experts as it does its foreign exports, and urged the Conference to explore avenues for keeping African brains in Africa, and to seek the ways of making the contribution of those in the Diaspora relevant to the development needs of the continent.

15. In her opening speech, Her Excellency Wzo. Genet Zewdie, Minister of Education, Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, welcomed all participants and honourable guests to the Conference and to Addis Ababa. She commended the timeliness of the conference when the people of Africa were engrossed with activities of several social, political and economic transformations and development efforts. She underscored the importance of education as the most effective means for sustainable socio-economic development. She pointed out that progress and development depended upon the products of educated minds, research, invention and innovation. Therefore, the loss of qualified and talented professionals to other countries and regions had become critical for many African countries, which, no doubt, had significantly affected their development endeavours. The Minister noted that Africa was losing billions of dollars in terms of its skilled manpower to developed nations from this unequal traffic of intellectual capital.

16. In conclusion, she urged the Conference to rethink government's role in making the education system more relevant and effective, which would strengthen Africa's base of critical capacities and commended the efforts of the organisers of the Conference for bringing a rich mix of experts to focus on the issues at hand.

17. The Minister of Education then wished the participants successful deliberations and declared the Regional Conference opened.

4.2 Sessions

4.2.1 Session 1

18. The first working session of the conference was chaired and moderated by Professor Ali A.G. Ali, Head of ECA's Economic and Social Policy Division. In his opening remarks, Professor Ali reminded the participants that the conference was planned to be action-oriented and as such was expected to result in the adoption of concrete, workable policy prescriptions for reversing the brain drain and promoting policies to enhance capacity building in Africa. He noted that the importance of the conference lay in the fact that addressing the challenges posed by the brain drain and capacity building remains the only path to achieving sustainable growth and development in Africa. He emphasised that this was made more urgent by the need for poverty eradication in Africa over the medium to long-term – a goal that had been set by African governments themselves.

19. The session also benefited from two presentations. The first presentation, entitled "The Brain Drain in Africa: What Do We Know?" was made by Dr. Meera Sethi of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in Addis Ababa. After a brief definition of the brain drain and its implications for the sustainable development of Africa, Dr. Sethi went on to advance reasons for the continued erosion of Africa's human resource base. Among the reasons given were political instability and civil strife, economic and social deterioration characterised by working and living conditions in the countries of origin. These factors were further compounded by social, psychological and demographic factors, which tended to influence the perceptions of potential migrants about comparative financial and career opportunities in the recipient countries. It was noted, however, that given a conducive political and economic environment at home, many Africans were prepared to return home for a variety of reasons, ranging from family ties, scholarship obligations to the need for jobs that better suit their qualifications or even to establish their own self-employment ventures.

20. Dr. Sethi informed the conference of the IOM's past and present efforts in addressing issues pertaining to reversing the brain drain through selective return migration of qualified nationals. Since 1983, the IOM has assisted Africa through its Return and Reintegration of African Nationals (RQAN) programme by helping countries identify priority skills needs, matching those needs with qualified nationals in their country of origin. The programme helped to return 2,565 of the most urgently needed professionals to Africa between 1983 and 1995. As a result, many African governments and employers have expressed interest in the continuation of the programme.

21. Dr. Sethi concluded her presentation by proposing that measures to reverse the brain drain must address the social, economic and political factors that are responsible for the problem. She suggested that the building of African capacities must involve the civil society so that it can be engaged in peace building, promotion of human rights, democracy and good governance and enhance Africa's capacity to integrate into the global economy.

22. In his presentation, Dr. Jack Katuala of the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) in Harare, Zimbabwe gave an account of the foundation's efforts in capacity building in Africa since its establishment in 1992. He said the foundation was established in 1992 to implement the

African Capacity-Building Initiative of the World Bank, the ADB, UNDP and other international bodies, particularly in the area of macro-economic policy analysis and management. The Foundation currently has projects in 22 African countries with a portfolio of over US\$ 80 million. He said the foundation adopted a holistic approach to capacity building, emphasising systems, processes and institutions. In this regard, the foundation has been engaged in providing assistance to African countries since 1992 in the formulation of national programmes for capacity building; the establishment of policy units within government departments and NGOs; and the development of regional training programmes. He said, however, that the major problem had been the lack of commitment on the part of most African governments to create the necessary environment and incentive systems that will ensure the sustainability of ACBF's programmes for capacity utilisation. The problem of sustainability also affected programmes design for NGO's because of their dependence on grants and external funding and the lack of a conducive environment for capacity utilisation. In addition, the narrow view taken by donors about technical assistance also contributed to the problem. As a solution, Dr. Katuala suggested a systemic approach in tackling the issue of brain drain and capacity building

23. In the interventions that followed the presentations, participants raised various issues pertaining to the problem of brain drain in general, and which could form the basis for the recommendations that would be adopted by the conference. Among them were the issue of funding modalities for programmes of the various agencies involved in capacity building activities in Africa; the need for these programmes to target more francophone African countries; the need to redefine the concept of brain drain to include brain drain within Africa itself; and the need to involve the private sector and civil society in these efforts. A common theme that ran through most of the interventions, and around which there was unanimity among the participants was that the brain drain, being a systemic problem needed to be tackled as such. In that regard, participants called on African governments, regional and sub-regional organisations to ensure a conducive political environment that would encourage the return of African professionals in the Diaspora as well as well as discourage others from leaving.

4.2.2 Session 2

24. The discussions on "capacity building in education: The impact of brain drain on higher education in Africa" and "Knowledge generation and retention in Africa" was led by a panel composed of Dr. D. Nmah Tarpeh representing the Association of African Universities (AAU) and Dr. Sibry Tapsoba, Regional Director, West and Central Africa, International Development Research Centre (IDRC). Mrs. Ndioro Ndiaye, Deputy Director General, International Organisation for Migration (IOM) chaired the discussion.

25. The panellists in their presentations recognised the vital role of human capital to Africa's development and the concomitant effect of the brain drain on higher education and knowledge generation and retention to Africa.

26. The effects of brain drain on Africa's universities date back to the 70's and 80's when Africa experienced its first wave of human resource outflows to other regions of the world. He recognised that as much as the causes and consequences of this loss varied from country to

country, there are some commonalities. The causes for human resource outflows included economic and political factors, poor working conditions, and insufficient job opportunities to absorb trained personnel and other repressive measures. These in many ways contributed to undermining the performance of universities and their capacity to play effective development role.

27. Given these conditions, revitalisation of Africa's higher educational systems and institutions remained a very daunting task. Efforts in this respect included revision of curricula to reflect the continent's development needs, encouraging the development of private universities, promoting efficient management practises and approaches, addressing the resources and other constraints and strengthening regional and institutional co-operation. A number of benefits have been realised from these efforts. For instance, the benefit of regional and institutional co-operation is the building of networks, which have helped to relief isolation and enhance institutional capacity. Development of private universities although limited in scope represents a viable alternative of sharing burden of higher education, which so far has been largely financed by governments.

28. The challenge of sustaining, building on and consolidating efforts should be driven by two considerations. The first is the need to address the broader development issues of increased private investment, build a culture of wealth creation and confidence in the private sector, expand business and market opportunities and promote good governance as the foundation for sustainable development; and the second is responding to the needs of higher educational system covering the quality and condition of service, development of information and technological capacity vital for networking and building linkages necessary to facilitate exchange of information and ideas.

29. The panellist in introducing the discussion on knowledge generation and retention emphasised the correlation between knowledge, development and competitiveness, especially in an era when competitiveness is expressed in terms of technology and knowledge. In today's global environment, wealth and competitive advantages are no longer based on agriculture, mining, but closely linked to technological and scientific knowledge. Africa's competitiveness in this area is not very encouraging when measured against its contribution to scientific knowledge. There is a large gap in Africa's contribution to scientific development compared to the rest of the world; capacity for knowledge is low when measured against expenditure on research

30. Policies on knowledge generation and retention are very weak and uncertain creating further instability in Africa's research capacity. The role of government in enhancing knowledge is crucial and this should include the democratisation of knowledge to catalyse all actors including private sector and civil society in the production of knowledge. Africa's competitiveness could be developed through investment in building ideas and knowledge including technological and scientific, of which human capital is crucial. Policy actions aimed at generating and retaining knowledge should include increasing budgetary allocation to research, identifying and building on niches to have comparative competitiveness advantages and favouring direct link between productive sector and return on investment.

31. The emphasis on promoting the return of Africans in the Diaspora is not realistic, neither is it enforceable. Africa does not have the means to accommodate mass returnees. It must rather explore ways and means of maximising the contribution of this large part human resource resident abroad by adopting appropriate policies and incentives. More attention should be on retaining experts in Africa by improving conditions for research while encouraging others to return.

32. These presentations were followed by general discussions. Some participants noted that while research generation is important, equal emphasis should be placed on both ends of the generation of knowledge and its dissemination. It was observed that the problem is making effective use of capacity both within and outside of the region. African countries must capitalise on the knowledge and capacity of African's in the Diaspora. The use of information technology networks is a valuable means to bridge the gap between those within and outside the region.

33. Some participants were of the view that past notions of brain drain need to be revisited to take into consideration the effect of liberalisation and the free movement of manpower as part of free trade. Furthermore, African countries need to adopt a scientific approach to defining human resources capacity gap that brain reversal is support to address. The questions are: how to conceive brain drain in the new global environment and how to establish whether a gap really exists and if so, what are the specifics of this gap are including the impact of the brain drain. Consequently, participants emphasised the need to address the causes of brain drain and knowledge generation and retention in a systematic and comprehensive manner including the political commitment and good will critical in catalysing contribution. Some participants noted that concrete measures leading to improvement in conditions for research and training should be adopted while alternative ways of generating knowledge should be explored including incentives for increasing the participation of the different stakeholders including private sector and donors. However this strategic partnership needs to recognise the responsibilities of government to provide leadership and the role of donors.

34. Participants stressed the need for resources to invest in a sound research and knowledge base with focus on high-tech and technical education as a foundation for enhancing Africa's industrialisation. Donors were urged to reconsider relaxing conditions for resources required for engaging experts to encourage the utilisation of local expertise.

35. A number of participants and institutions shared their experiences in addressing brain drain and knowledge generation and retention. These included projects at the local level encouraging the use of indigenous expatriates to undertake short term assignments and other development activities in their home countries. Some countries are encouraging the establishment of private universities to accommodate the training needs and attract training staff.

36. The experience of the Secretariat for Institutional Support to Economic Research Centres in Africa (SISERA) was presented by Dr. Diery Seck and found that his institution's response to the brain drain problem in Africa has been encouraging and illuminating. Using resources from

northern donors, SISERA has established a network with partner institutions within Africa to respond to the various issues of human capital formation including brain drain. One major contribution to their search for a sustainable solution is the definition of the various types and forms of brain drain, which are categorised as: (i) brain migration, (ii) brain decay or silencing and isolation of local researchers was due to lack of upgrading and (iii) brain diversion or the intellectual capture of Africa's best by the West.

37. According to SISERA, the cause of the brain drain included loss of productivity and a demoralised work force, which forced the outflow of human resources from the region to look elsewhere for better conditions and incentives. A number of assistance programmes including the provision of core grants, technical support to expose African researchers to best practises and promoting total intellectual independence have been tested and found useful. These programmes are aimed at building institutional capacity, increasing the utilisation of capacity and development of centres of excellence by focussing on developing sound managerial practices, promoting mobility, encouraging staff training and development, providing incentives in the form of resources, facilities and improved conditions. Activities in capacity utilisation focussed on the establishment of Zonal Intellectual Networks (ZIN), mobilising and linking dispersed capacity for developing centres of excellence. These constituted intellectual powerhouses, providing research and consultancy services within their sub-region.

38. There was a general consensus among participants on the need to sustain efforts to improve research in the region. Most participants also stressed the need to pay particular attention to the following:

- Facilitating and providing incentives to improve the dissemination and utilisation of research findings.
- Redirecting research to address the development needs of the continent.
- Increasing co-operation with other partners including OAU and other sub-regional groups to strengthen efforts in human capital building and utilisation.
- Rationalising brain drain to define the positive aspects including financial returns of migrants and their influence on policies towards Africa.
- The adoption by OAU, of treaties to protect intellectual property rights of knowledge and ideas from research.
- Addressing the exclusion of other groups including those in the performing and visual arts, sports and middle level manpower.
- Addressing the non-recognition and low utilisation of the existing expertise and capacity of women, which represents significant brain drain.

4.2.3 Session 3

39. Dr Jean Baptiste Meyer, of the University of Cape Town, South Africa as well as of the Insitut de Recherche pour le Développement, France, spoke on the South African Network of Skills Abroad (SANSA) initiative as a concrete example of a brain gain strategy. He said that highly trained South Africans abroad are considered potential ambassadors of knowledge for their country. He explained how this identification and communication approach taps into the knowledge, resources, and networks set up by nationals abroad, mainly in the United States and

Europe. The network, he continued, is formed by senior academicians, corporate executives who are working in universities, companies or as consultants in the fields of humanities, management, engineering, medicine and the arts, and who are recruited for short term assignments in their countries of origin.

40. Dr Meyer informed the audience about the need for information systems and databases to enable network members to know about needs at home, and for institutions and businesses in South Africa to know who is available in the network. The database, he said, contains information regarding the resources in the Diaspora, codes for location and technical expertise, and the local needs. He concluded the presentation by emphasising the strong commitment by the government to regard those in the Diaspora as a national assets, that need to be utilised.

41. Mr Phillip Fergusson of the African Foundation for Development (AFFORD) based in London, England gave the second presentation and spoke about the AFFORD agencies in Africa as a brain gain approach emphasising that Africans in the Diaspora are key partners in African development. He showed how AFFORD's approach is a flexible and holistic strategy to establish partnerships with Africans in the Diaspora. He argued that the "brains" of interest in the Diaspora range beyond highly trained scholars in science and technology (important as these are). Indeed, recent patterns of migration from Africa would point to the formation of entrepreneurs such as the Senegalese in Harlem, New York, Ghanaians, Nigerians, and Sierra Leoneans in Southeast London with much to contribute to Africa's primary challenge of poverty eradication. Second, these "brains" in the Diaspora were not isolated, disconnected entities but active parts of translocal communities. The tragedy was that so much of this energy, talent and knowledge is under-utilised because this diasporan African-led development effort is ignored by the so-called mainstream international development effort targeted Africa.

42. In order to ensure that the Diaspora contribute more effectively to Africa's development, the international development community – donors governments, foundations, aid agencies, etc. must be held accountable to ensure that their strategies for Africa's capacity building integrate the use of Africans in the Diaspora. Also in the long term, this Conference should facilitate and enable direct connections between networks of Africans at home and abroad that will build and strengthen African institutions able to drive forwards an autonomous development agenda at all levels of society. The international development community must go beyond paying mere lip service to Africa's capacity building and build on important policy development such as that by the UK government that is now committed to working with migrants to development their countries of origin. African governments need to make the mental shift and see Africans abroad as valuable resources and adapt policies accordingly, some governments have already made this shift and others can learn from the experience. African civil society organisations at home and abroad must make direct connections to exchange the skills, ideas, information and resources, to effect change on the ground in Africa; what is important is that Africans at home drive the agenda and are supported by Africans abroad.

43. The participants made several comments. Some experts remarked that the above types of concrete actions are imperative; that the two approaches are encouraging, and that the advantages of these approaches and efforts of reversing the brain drain from the continent

should be further explored. UNESCO's IICBA representative pointed out that a paradigm shift had occurred whereby the bringing back strategy was considered obsolete and the Diaspora options had become more realistic and feasible. The experience of China and India in tapping its nationals living in the US and Europe was put forward as an interesting example for Africa to follow.

44. The ECA mentioned the African Telecommunications Think Tank as another example of a virtual body made of experts in the Diaspora which is relevant and relatively inexpensive to implement. The OAU representative supported the idea that repatriation is no longer a viable option and proposed that the specific recommendations of this conference be adopted as talking points in the upcoming negotiations between Africa and the European Union. Sibry Tapsoba, the Chairperson, closed the session by stating that assistance to those who want to return is as important as strategies to retain those who have already returned as well as those who had not left the continent. He added that countries must take advantage of the Diaspora while at the same time improving training, reviewing the education system, improving the incentive structure and strengthened the educational Africa's youth's education.

4.2.4 Session 4.

45. Session 4 of day 2 of the Regional Conference on Brain Drain and Capacity Building in Africa looked at experiences of countries and institutions. Nineteen papers were prepared but given the time constraint of 15 minutes for presentation only 12 presentations of country experiences were heard.

46. The presentations outlined some of the problems linked to brain drain in Africa and some of the present attempts to curb and reverse the trend in the various countries. The problems outlined ranged from political instability, weak macro-economic framework, poor management of resources, corrupt practices, poor quality education programmes, low budgetary allocations to higher education and research thus stifling the interest and morale of academicians leading to a dearth of trained and suitably qualified personnel.

47. The proposals to stem the tide of brain drain included the following:

- More focus on brain circulation and employment of virtual means for the generation and retention of knowledge rather than an over concentration returnees physical movements which can be very expensive and unsustainable
- Systematic documentation of the extent of the problem and the necessary strategy to employed in making best use of the talents and expertise in the Diaspora
- Improvement of the quality and focus of tertiary and higher education utilising non conventional approaches for resource mobilisation through sub-regional co-operation, Consultancy services, and creation of centres of excellence
- Increased govt. insurance for stability, good governance and attractive incentive packages for the talented and the skilled
- Increased budgetary allocation to higher education and research services
- More involvement of the private sector and industries to serve as the engine of growth for the economy

- A more careful look at Africans embrace of globalisation and trade liberalisation as it could have a negative effect on development
- A more aggressive policy of networking with migrated brains in order to stimulate brain decay and under utilisation on expertise in the Diaspora especially
- On-going capacity building and replacement of migrated brains
- Fully exploiting local philanthropists and millionaires to help fund tertiary and higher education institutions.

48. The overall discussion that ensued and the conclusions reached during the session converged towards an acceptance of a holistic approach to address the phenomenon. It called for reform measures at the political, economical, educational, ICT strategy and tolerance for the free flow of human capital particularly development of policies on horizontal migration and pan-Africanism.

4.2.4 Session 5: Working Group Sessions

49. The Conference broke into three working groups for an in depth analysis of the following major issues:

- Brain drain at different sectors: measures for reversing it;
- Strategies for improving government-education-industry linkages in capacity building; and
- Knowledge generation and retention in Africa

50. The groups were guided by terms of reference which required them to :

- Identify three specific actions/activities for the follow-up;
- Identify specific strategies for each suggested action/activities;
- Suggest roles/responsibilities for actors including government, private sector, ngo/civil society, and development partners; and
- Propose concrete means of mobilizing the required financial and human resources.

4.2.6 Session 6: Reports by the Working Groups

51. The rapporteurs of the various groups presented their reports to the Plenary on Day 3 of the Conference, which is attached in the annex of this report.

52. In the discussions that ensued the presentations of the reports of the working groups, participants raised various issues among which were the following: the need to involve regional central banks in funding higher education; the difficulty of applying cost recovery schemes in African universities as well as introducing tax incentives to attract the private sector into education; the need to make use of distance education employing ICTs; the use of Alumni associations as source of financial and human capital; the need to involve professionals in higher education in order to strengthen linkages between universities and the industrial community; the

need for endowing African universities to expand their resource base by looking into innovative fund raising mechanisms.

53. Recognising however the need for the Conference to be action-oriented and as such to limit itself to the formulation of realistic and workable policy measures, the participants resolved to recommending the following concrete actions:

- Setting up of a data base on African migration
- Entrusting the promotion of distance education to the Association of African Universities (AAU) in collaboration with the International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA-UNESCO) and the Francophonie.
- Enhancing and expanding the RQAN and TOKTEN programmes.
- Generating and retaining knowledge for the centres of excellence.

4.2.7 Session 7: Panel Discussion on Brain Gain and Capacity Building

54. The main highlight of the Regional Conference on Brain Drain and Capacity Building in Africa was the panel discussion on "Brain Drain and Capacity" led by a panel composed of Ms. Eva Rathgeber, IDRC, Mr. Abdel Gaffar, OSSREA, Mr. Douglas Sheldon, USAID, Mr. Philip Fergusson, AFFORD, Mr. Leaba O. Wawa, Organisation of African Unity, Mr. A.A.G. Ali, Economic Commission for Africa, Ms. Meera Sethi, International Organisation for Migration. Ms. Fay Chung, IICBA-UNESCO, moderated the panel presentation and discussion.

55. The panellists in their presentations highlighted a number of important issues including the importance of human capital to Africa's development, how to address the specific concerns of human capital development, its generation, utilisation and retention, the mobilisation of funds to support higher education and research institutions as well as the roles of the various actors in addressing the daunting challenges of brain drain and capacity.

56. Particular emphasis was made on the need for government commitment, which should start with the recognition that brain drain is a major development concern/issue and to take appropriate action. Various approaches to dealing with the problem should be explored and one good best practice case was that of Canada, where the government concerned with the brain drain among its young scientists has demonstrated its commitment to deal with it. The Canadian government through endowment programmes within the universities provided incentives in the form of endowing chairs, salaries and research funds to attract young scientists.

57. Panellists observed that the twin issues of brain drain and capacity building are not only central to Africa's development but also to the present economic development era, in which knowledge, advanced technology, information, connectivity and brain power define the new comparative advantage. The challenge for Africa is to break into the new frontiers of brain power and knowledge, which would require adopting appropriate policies and mobilising resources to enable it build this capacity and position itself in the new knowledge and ideas age.

58. The development and emergence of powerful trading blocks within and outside the

region challenges Africa to redefine its human capital needs in a much more broader context to reflect these changing circumstances. This calls for the creation/strengthening of regional knowledge blocks/centres of excellence by providing them with facilities, financial resources and to improve their capacity to generate and maintain a sound research and higher educational base to support the development of human capital. The underlying assumption is that these human resources are required in the first place and therefore the need to pay equal attention to its effective utilisation to avoid large pool of unemployed. African countries would have to pay greater attention towards training and development that generate self-employment and such training should be linked to private sector and industrial needs. Equally important is the need to explore ways of harnessing the huge energies and commitment of new graduates.

59. Some panellists noted that the tremendous potential of Africans in the Diaspora must be reached and tapped to contribute to development efforts of the region. Finding concrete ways to engage the Diaspora should include finding out how they are organised abroad and penetrating these associations by engaging in to dialogue, and promoting joint activities in various areas of development. Such activities include exploiting and tapping on the private sector knowledge resident abroad to generate micro and self-employment initiatives. The use of information technology to engage and maintain contact with the Diaspora should also be pursued, solicit their contribution, build identity cultural and links.

60. Panellists underscored the need to create databases as the first step to promoting knowledge and information economy. These databases should incorporate various aspects of existing capacity and classified according to expertise and specialisation's within and outside the region, sectoral development needs covering the private and industrial sector as well as programmes and activities on capacity building,

61. Some participants noted that to discourage further brain drain, attract returnees and engage those cannot come back should be seen against the background of high illiteracy, hunger and poverty, inadequate health facilities, which remain to be important factors in efforts in these areas. Furthermore, the existence of conducive environment including availability of basic facilities, adequate opportunities for research and attractive salary in the educational system with a focus on tertiary level are necessary conditions. The need to speed up the integration process leading to the development of the African economic community to enhance movements of goods and people was also seen as necessary actions to address brain gain. In this regard, the ECA and OAU were urged to clearly articulate policy options and strategies to be adopted by governments to address the above stated underlying factors, which negate on efforts to address brain drain.

62. Panellists also underscored the need for African governments to commit to the utilisation of African expertise in skilled areas. To that extent, a suggestion was made to consider when possible the employment/contracting of African experts. It is also important to associate representatives of youth, women, and civil society organisations in advocating the effective use of African skills.

63. Participants emphasised on the need for partnership that engages all to take a

comprehensive and concerted action. Actions should aim at among others:

- AAU and Centres of Excellence developing and providing training programmes in relevant areas.
- Development partners in particular IDRC; USAID assisting and supporting Centres of Excellence develop programmes in Africa.
- ECA, IOM along with other development actors create and maintain databases covering existing expertise in the region and among the Diaspora as well as to capture and disseminate information on other areas of need.
- Promote the use of information and communication technology for networking and accessing information.
- OAU to be more proactive in sensitising and generating awareness on the issues of brain drain including programming it in the agenda of the next OAU Summit.

4.2.8. Conference Report and Closure

64. The activities of the past three days were summarised by Mr. J.N. Ngu, focal point for the Regional Conference on Brain Drain and Capacity Building in Africa. After some deliberations of the draft report, the Chairperson of the closing session suggested that all interventions should be written and submitted to the secretariat for incorporation in the final report.

65. On closing the Conference, Ms. Lalla Ben Barka, the Deputy Executive Secretary of ECA hailed the importance of the work that has been accomplished, congratulated the participants for their active engagement, and applauded the IOM and IDRC for their effective partnership in co-organising the Conference. She observed that ECA needs partners to further maximise the impact we can make collectively on Africa by pooling efforts and co-ordinating diverse activities to serve the continent better. From the analysis and discussions during the Conference, three priority areas for action to build capacity in Africa as well as contain the brain drain problem by year 2002 were identified. These were:

1. Establishing a database on brain drain and capacity building.

Supporting capacity building efforts in Africa as well as limiting the negative aspects of the brain drain must be based on concrete facts, data and information. Developing a data bank on these issues will be instrumental in linking up with different sectors, especially in terms of the impact of brain drain on the socio-economic development of countries in the region. In this regard, the establishment and updating of such a data base will be a vital instrument for decision makers in the formulation of policy including development partners, universities, organisations in the Diaspora, and other stake holders. The lead agency identified for this activity is the ECA and it will work in close collaboration with IOM, IDRC, OAU, SANSA, AFFORD, ACBF, OSSREA and FAS.

2. Creating knowledge blocks

To complement national efforts in addressing deficiencies in education and training

capacities as well as to maintain and effectively utilise them, it was proposed that various knowledge blocks be established. These knowledge blocks would respond to the need for highly skilled people in core areas of the labour market as well as changing skills needs in the marketplace. These knowledge blocks should include networks of institutions of research and training; centres of excellence in the various economic blocks of the region; collaborative programmes such as the twinning of northern and southern institutions; distance education; etc. The lead agency identified for this activity is the IDRC and it will work with SISERA, ECA, OAU, IICBA, ACBF, AAU, IOM, OSSREA and the ADB. The IDRC in collaboration with the above-mentioned institutions will act as a catalyst for ideas, action and capacity building in Africa.

3. Forging partnership with the Diaspora

Forging effective partnership with the Diaspora implies building capacity and exploiting existing capacity within the network of highly skilled African expatriate groups in the Diaspora. The Diaspora option allows the country of origin access to not only the skills and expertise of expatriates, but also the knowledge networks that they constitute in the host country. Co-operation with Diaspora in the socio-economic areas should be seen in the context of facilitating the return of qualified nationals and participating in the strengthening of regional economic communities (RECs) and ultimately the building of the African Economic Community (AEC). The lead agency identified for this activity is the IOM and it will work with SANSA, AFFORD, AAU, FAS and the ADB.

66. A Steering Committee consisting of the three co-organisers of the Conference was set up to follow-up in collaboration with IICBA, ACBF, AAU, OAU, SANSA, AFFORD, etc the implementation of the above core activities. The OAU was called upon to transmit the recommendations of the Conference to its various organs. In the meantime, the Committee with the assistance of the OAU, should explore the modalities for sensitising member States and to have them internalised and own the recommendations of the Regional Conference on Brain Drain and Capacity Building in Africa.

67. The Chairperson of the Conference, Ms. Lalla Ben Barka, stressed that the participants should contribute to the effectively implementation of actions recommended by the Conference. She then declared the Conference closed.

ANNEXES

REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP 1 ON

1. BRAIN DRAIN AT DIFFERENT SECTORS: MEASURES FOR REVERSING IT

After having considered the TORs given to the Group, the participants elected to amend its mandate so as to focus its deliberations on the quantification of the brain drain phenomenon rather than on measures for reversing it as originally stipulated.

The discussions of the Group were articulated around the following 5 areas:

I. Need for the establishment of an observatory

This proposal aimed at addressing the issue of lack of reliable data on brain drain in Africa. Collection and dissemination of information would indeed better assist in appreciating the magnitude of the phenomenon. In this regard, the setting up of a permanent observatory on African scientist migrations was recommended. A preliminary inventory of knowledge/skills available is a prerequisite to any mobilisation efforts of human capital in Africa. This inventory should take into account the following:

- The various level of data collection (regional, sub-regional and national)
- Generation and dissemination of ideas and information in Africa
- The impact of migration on countries of origin
- Transfer and financial influx.

II. Institutional capacity building

Since this initiative depends on sub-regional centres of excellence, the meeting recommended that, rather than establishing new centres, criteria are set so as to underplay political interference and the weight of State sovereignty in the functioning of these centres. Activities in support of the centres should therefore evolve around the following:

- Strengthening existing regional programmes by ways of avoiding duplication
- Merging institutions engaged in similar activities
- Taking inventory of existing centres with a view to reorienting their statements toward training and research activities.

III. Networking of various activities

This proposal aimed at facilitating exchanges among African expertise. To this end, the meeting proposed the following:

- Encourage the utilisation of NTIC in education
- Promote new forms of mobility (short stay, sabbatical year, etc...)
- Strengthening of existing programmes (TOKTEN, RQAN, etc..) with a view to extending them at regional level.
- Taking inventory of inventions made by African researchers and disseminating them
- Initiate exchange programmes as well as training courses for young Africans living abroad so as to enable them visit regularly their country of origin.
- Remove obstacles to private investment in Africa specially for Africans of the Diaspora
- Develop and implement specific schemes for Africans intending not to return
- Undertake studies in various institutions so as to identify Africans intending to return.

a.IV. The various actors

The Group identified the following actors for which it suggested activities to be carried out in support of reversing brain drain in Africa:

1. Governments

1.1. Observatory

- Strengthen statistical data collection institutions;
- Allocate adequate resources to universities engaged in data collection;
- Improve migration laws;
- Reduce duplication

1.2. Centres of excellence

- Assist in their funding;
- Ensure linkages between private sector and the research community;
- Promote university-private sector partnership;
- Adopt good governance and democratic rules

2. Private sector

2.1. General actions

- Should contribute to the financing of the observatory, the centres of excellence and the networks

2.2. Specific actions

- Observatory: Should participate in various forms – consultation, direct

involvement, research and polls.

- Centres of excellence: Private sector should forge partnership with the centres, set up research foundations for nationals, market and disseminate the outputs of the centres
- Networks: Utilisation of African expertise living abroad and play a mediation role among experts

3. Diaspora and civil society

- Setting up of an observatory: Assist in: (i) the collection of information; (ii) dissemination of existing information; (iii) securing foreign investments; (iv) assessment of potential resources available in the Diaspora; (v) sensitising on data collection and in playing an advocacy role.
- Exchange programmes: Initiate joint research programmes and assist in sourcing the necessary funds

4. International partners

- Should further commit themselves and assist in data collect efforts;
- Ensure the recruitment of Africans in Diaspora in the field of data collection and processing;
- Ensure equity in job remuneration and conditions;
- Orient national political decisions toward the creation of an enabling environment;
- Rationalise their activities to avoid duplication of efforts; and
- Promote development projects.

a.V. Implementing actors

- ECA
- IOM
- African economic integration organisations
- OAU

**REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP 2
ON
STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING GOVERNMENT—EDUCATION-INDUSTRY
LINKAGES IN CAPACITY BUILDING**

Preamble:

One of the major weaknesses in capacity building is lack of effective linkages between Government, industry and educational institution. Creation and strengthening of these linkages help to create challenging opportunities for utilization of knowledge and skills of the trained manpower within the region and results of research from the higher education institutions including universities, polytechnics and higher educational institutions. These linkages can act as forces to attract those skilled professionals who would wish to return to their countries of origin. Strong linkages can assist in the following objectives:

- Enabling educational sector to be response to the industry in terms of the curriculum development
- Encouraging creativity among the professionals and within the educational institutions
- Promoting entrepreneurship
- Providing for internship training for trainees.
- Creating job opportunities
- Generating resources for research institutions

1) Specific Actions

To help achieve the above objectives the following actions are recommended:

1. Create policy and legal framework
2. Review and strengthen training and research activities
3. Promote critical industries based on local resources

2) Strategies

- On policy framework
- Promotion of dialogue withal stakeholders
- Strengthening the capacity of Governments in formulation of public policies
- Provision of incentives such as tax incentives and reduction of customs duty.
- Selective protection of certain critical industries
- Concession loans through banks to assist in industrialisation

On Training and Research

- Encourage industries to fund training through trust funds
- Encourage professionals from industries to play a role in teaching in educational

institutions

- Periodic review of curriculum to ensure that it suits the needs of industry
- Encourage universities to establish policies for linkages with industries
- Resource mobilisation from private sector

On Promoting Critical Industries

- Develop legal framework to encourage development of industries
- Provide incentives for critical industries
- Encourage utilisation of local resources

3) Roles for Actors

- The role Government is critical in developing strong and effective linkages between the Government, industry and educational institutions.

The Government should view the private sector as an engine of growth. In this respect it is recommended that the Government should:

- Design policy and legal framework which provide for enabling environment
- Play active role in initiating dialogue with all stakeholders
- Ensure that there is strong relationship between the university and industry
- The private sector/business association such as the association for manufacturers, chamber of commerce, etc. should play an active role in facilitating government/industry/education sector linkages
- The private sector should make their needs known by professional organisation including universities.
- The industry should provide for attachment/industrial training for university students, scholarships and research grants to universities.
- The NGO/Civil Society should contribute towards design of enabling environment for effective linkages.
- There is need for a mechanism to co-ordinate activities of NGOs to enhance capacity building
- There is need for re-thinking among the development partners in providing technical assistance, for example in the need to utilise local expertise.
- There is need to co-ordinate development partners efforts to maximise the use of their support in capacity building
- A certain portion of the technical assistance funding should be devoted to capacity building
- Universities should make their research results known and establish policy on the establishment of linkages with industries. The universities have the responsibility of reviewing the curriculum to ensure its relevance to the needs of industry

4) Mobilisation of Resources

- Government should provide incentives through budget to the critical industries
- Government should make contributions towards trust fund for capacity building
- African Governments should be considered for debt forgiveness and the interest component of the funding directed towards education and health care.
- Government should have policies designed to reduce corruption
- Civil society should be encouraged to contribute towards trust fund for capacity building

**1. REPORT ON THE WORKING GROUP 3
ON
KNOWLEDGE GENERATION AND RETENTION IN AFRICA**

The Working Group on Knowledge Generation and Retention discussed the issue within the terms of reference provided. The Group drawing from the discussions at plenary came up with a number of proposals on follow-up actions, strategies and procedures required to mobilize resources. These are provided as follows:

Follow-up Actions and strategies:

Follow-up Actions	1. Strategies to be adopted
Match business needs with training and higher education.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage private sector to finance education 2. Tax incentives for businesses supporting education. 3. Database for labour market needs. 4. Impose Education Tax.
Mechanism to follow-up and maintain contact with student abroad	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Database of students and specialisation. 2. Develop mentoring system in home country. 3. Funds for providing scholarships to student and fund for reintegration in home country. 4. Study conditions of student abroad. 5. Electronic discussion list and network for keeping in touch with students and sponsors.
Support research institutions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify pertinent research needs. 2. Support training for young researchers. 3. Provision of core grants and institutional support grant
Pool resources to create centre of excellence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organise joint programmes with universities and other higher level training institution: model of PTCI/AERC

	M.A. programmes proposed by Diery Seck. 2. Create special funds to finance centres. 3. Encourage exchange of expertise/scholars. 4. Sensitise and mobilise donor agencies support. 5. Special taxes for funding these centres.
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3.Suggested roles/responsibilities for Actors:

The group decided to revert this to ECA, who after final agreement on specific actions would then consult with other actors to define and allocate responsibilities.

4. How/Who to mobilize required resources: These are as follows:
 - i. As much as government has the critical role in resource mobilisation it should explore cost sharing arrangements with others, e.g. it owns infrastructure with private management.
 - ii. Explore alternative financing with NGOs and private sector.
 - iii. Explore cost recovery options/solutions.
 - iv. North-South twinning.
 - v. Virtual universities and distance education.
 - vi. Impose training and education fund earmarked for education only.
 - vii. Explore grants, loans and other forms of donor support.
 - viii. Western universities could move into Africa instead of African students moving to the West.

**Regional Conference on Brain Drain and Capacity Building in Africa
(Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 22-24 February 2000)**

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